

Remarks

Claims 1, 16, 19, 21-23, 26, 28, 29, and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,127,532 issued to Cimino et al. (hereinafter "the Cimino patent"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Initially, it must be noted that paragraphs [0008] through [0011] of the present application discuss prior-known key identification systems. These systems are generally grouped into two categories: (1) image based systems; and (2) physical recognition systems.

While not specifically discussed amongst other known systems in paragraph [0009], the Cimino patent is clearly an example of an image-based system. The Cimino patent is an automatic key identification system that utilizes an image-based system (e.g. the specific arrangement of cameras, lenses, lighting, etc.) to capture the frontal, cross-sectional image of a master key and compare that image against other frontal, cross-sectional images of known key blanks. Such systems are known in the art and it was the Applicants intention to specifically distinguish such systems from the claimed invention throughout the specification and in the claims as filed.

The written description of the application as well as the claims as originally filed are believed to explicitly distinguish the claimed invention over references such as the Cimino patent. For example, claim 1 as filed requires a "user interface means for inputting at least one specified variable related to a first object, said specified variable being physically observed by a user of the system" (emphasis added). Further, Claim 19 as filed requires a computer having "a graphical user interface for inputting at least one specified variable

related to a first object, said specified variable being physically observed by a user of the system" (emphasis added).

The written description describes the specified variables physically observed by a user of the system as follows:

[0030] Typically, the input will be based upon easily identifiable traits found on the object, such as product or serial numbers, brand names, intended use(s) of the object (e.g., a house key versus a car key or number 2 Phillips head screw driver versus a regular flat blade) and the like. In keeping with the invention's stated goal of user-friendliness and in stark contrast to the physical recognition system described above, only limited (if any) physical manipulation of the object or reliance upon other implements is necessary in order to determine these inputs.

Therefore, the user of the system must be capable of physically observing or knowing the specified variables or identifiable traits of the object that are to be inputted into the system.

Such operation as claimed is in stark contract to the Cimino patent. For example, as stated a column 4, lines 30-31, "It is only the cross-sectional edges which are of interest in the identification process." Thus, the user in Cimino cannot physically observe or identify the variables of interest in the frontal, cross-sectional view of the key. This is why the image-based system is required, so as to capture the image and compare it against other know images having distinguishable, but not physically observable by the user, differences used to identify the proper key blank.

Nevertheless, in order to further prosecution, Applicants herein amend independent claims 1 and 19 to further recite that the physically observed variable is observed by the user based upon a visual inspection of the object. Therefore, the Cimino patent is further distinguishable from claims 1 and 19 because the visual inspection provide in Cimino is not provided by the user, but by the image-based system itself. Therefore, based upon the

arguments above and the amendments provided herein, Applicants believe that independent claims 1 and 19 are distinguishable from the Cimino patent and neither claims 1 or 19 read on the system described in the Cimino patent. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections based upon Section 102 and the Cimino patent and indicate independent claims 1 and 19 patentable thereover.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejects claims 3, 4, 14, 17, 25, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Cimino patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,406,227 ("the Titus patent"). The Examiner rejects claims 5, 6, 18, 30, 31, 33, and 34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Cimino patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,711,557 ("the Palaniappan patent"). The Examiner also rejects claims 7-13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Cimino patent and the Titus patent in view of the Palaniappan patent. Finally, the Examiner rejects claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Cimino patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,065,911 ("the Almblad patent").

Applicants believe that the above arguments and amendments to independent claims 1 and 19 clearly distinguish the claims from the Cimino patent. As such, Applicants believe any possible combination of the Cimino reference with either the Titus patent, the Palaniappan patent, the Almblad patent, or an combination thereof cannot support an obviousness rejection. Therefore, based upon the above arguments and amendments, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all §103(a) rejections.

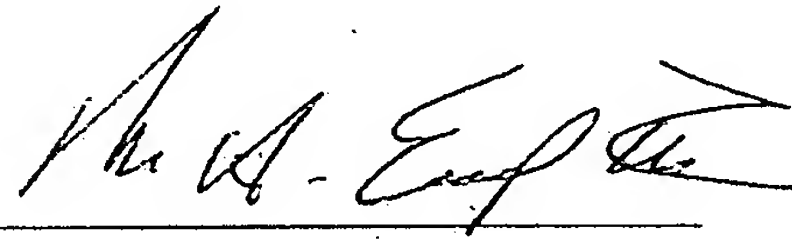
Conclusion

Therefore, based upon the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions pertaining to the above, undersigned Counsel would welcome a phone call to provide any further clarification or discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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